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Patrick Administration Awards Nearly \$2.8 Million to Protect Land Near Public Water Supplies

Funding Will Help Protect Over 390 Acres in Eight Cities and Towns

BOSTON – More than 390 acres of land vital to safeguarding the quality of public wells and reservoirs will be protected from development as a result of nine Drinking Water Supply Protection Grants announced today by Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Ian Bowles and Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Commissioner Laurie Burt.

Totaling \$2.76 million, the grants will help municipalities acquire land that protects public drinking water supplies. Land acquired through the program is declared as protected open space for drinking water supply protection purposes under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution and is open to the general public for appropriate recreational use.

“Conserving key parcels of land is vital to ensuring that we will always have an abundant supply of clean water – our most precious resource,” Secretary Bowles said. “The grants we’re announcing today will help to meet this important goal in eight communities around the Commonwealth.”

Awarded through a competitive process, the EEA/MassDEP Drinking Water Supply Protection Grants cover up to half (but not more than \$500,000) of total project costs. Local partners provide the balance of funding. Over the past three years, the Commonwealth has invested over \$5.8 million through the program to help protect 1,372 acres of land.

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“MassDEP has a comprehensive approach to protecting drinking water sources,” Commissioner Burt said. “Protecting vulnerable water supply lands, through acquisition or the development of conservation restrictions, prevents contamination from inappropriate land uses and is a key component of this approach. The grants provide funds and partnering opportunities to public water systems to protect prioritized lands.”

FY 2008 Drinking Water Supply Protection grants were awarded to these cities and towns:

Fitchburg

Fitchburg Reservoir Protection Project - Crocker and Cassano Parcels, Ashby: \$391,500

- 120 acres
- The acquisition will help protect the most vulnerable drinking water recharge area in this water supply and connects to more than 250 acres of protected open space.

Fitchburg

Fitchburg Reservoir Protection Project - Rice Parcel, Ashburnham: \$141,250

- 50 acres
- The acquisition will help protect the most vulnerable drinking water recharge area of this water supply. It nearly encompasses a tributary pond and connects to more than 250 acres of protected open space.

Worcester - Pine Hill Reservoir Acquisition, Rutland: \$500,000

- 100 acres
- This acquisition will help protect 1.24 miles of frontage on two tributaries to the Pine Hill Reservoir.

Sudbury - Sudbury Municipal Well Protection Project, Sudbury: \$247,350

- 9.7 acres
- The acquisition of this abandoned railbed will help provide permanent protection for five well sites in Sudbury.

Cohasset – Lily Pond Reservoir Protection Project, Cohasset: \$366,850

- 30 acres
- The project helps to protect the most vulnerable drinking water recharge area of this water supply. In addition, most of the land involved in this acquisition is designated BioMap core habitat – a classification that identifies areas most in need of protection to conserve the native biodiversity of the Commonwealth.

Ipswich - Lynch Property Acquisition, Ipswich: \$495,175

- 19.2 acres
- This acquisition will help protect a town well, and 0.5 (one-half) mile of frontage on a tributary to the Bull Brook Reservoir.

Marshfield - Union Street Acquisition, Marshfield: \$55,000

- 10 acres
- This acquisition is entirely within the Zone II recharge area of the town’s Union Street wells.

Medfield - Saw Mill Brook Conservation Land Project, Medfield: \$500,000

- 42 acres
- This acquisition is 95 percent within the Zone II recharge area for the former Medfield State Hospital well site and connects to more than 250 acres of protected open space.

Salisbury - Donald Chase Trust Property Acquisition, Salisbury: \$70,500

- 13 acres
- The majority of land involved in this acquisition is located within 500 feet of the Zone I area of two town wells.

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